

Message Text

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FOR ARA ONLY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, HO
SUBJ: AMENDMENT TO DRAFT HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT-HONDURAS

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 4319

1. LIBERAL PARTY (PLH) HELD A LARGE, PUBLIC RALLY (AS OPPOSED TO INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING) ON AUGUST 10 IN SAN PEDRO SULA. ELECTORAL LAW TITLE 2, CHAPTER 4, ARTICLE 78, PROVIDES THAT "CONCENTRATIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL PURPOSES CAN BE HELD AT ANY TIME. CONCENTRATIONS OR PARADES FOR THE PURPOSE OF ELECTORAL POLITICAL PROPAGANDA WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED FROM THE DATE OF CONVOKING ELECTIONS (DECEMBER 1, 1979) UNTIL FIVE DAYS BEFORE THE DAY SELECTED FOR ELECTIONS."

2. PLH SOURCES HAVE CONFIRMED TO EMBOFF THAT RODAS' RALLY (BEING REPORTED SEPARATELY) FALLS WITHIN "ORGANIZATIONAL PURPOSES" AS EMPHASIS WAS PLACED ON VOTER REGISTRATION, EDUCATION, ETC. NEVERTHELESS, MORE OF THESE MEETINGS CAN PROBABLY BE EXPECTED, AND REPRESENT ANOTHER INDICATION OF INCREASING MOMENTUM FOR THE ELECTORAL PROCESS. IT SEEMS LIKELY POLITICIANS WILL INCREASINGLY USE THIS PRETEXT TO MOTIVATE RANK AND FILE, BUT PROBABLY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO MOUNT REALLY LARGE RALLIES UNTIL ACTUAL OPENING OF CAMPAIGN.

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3. IN VIEW FOREGOING, EMBASSY SUGGESTS DRAFT HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT (REFTEL, PARA 4) BE AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: "POLITICAL PARTIES ARE FREE TO HOLD ORGANIZATIONAL MEETINGS, SOME OF WHICH HAVE BEEN LARGE AND OPEN, AS WELL AS TO PUBLICIZE DECLARATIONS WHICH ARE OFTEN CRITICAL OF GOVERNMENT POLICIES. RALLIES AND PARADES HAVE BEEN SUSPENDED SINCE 1972. ACCORDING TO THE ELECTORAL LAW,

THEY WILL BE PERMITTED ONCE THE CAMPAIGN OFFICIALLY BEGINS, IN
DECEMBER 1979. STUDENTS AND OTHER INTEREST GROUPS...."
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